



Blue Heron Academy Opposition to the Amos/AMTA Massage Bill

Members of the House Health Policy Committee:

The State of Michigan has established a laudable record of supporting and expanding student access to distance education in Michigan schools. This support has involved different educational technologies from classroom televisions to desk and laptop computers, it has also included supporting the Michigan Virtual University and the Michigan Consortium of Community Colleges.

"Our online learning requirement makes Michigan a leader among all the states in using the power of the Internet to create learning opportunities in the classroom, the home and the workplace. In a world that demands life long learning, we are giving our students and our state a competitive advantage when it comes to landing the good-paying jobs of the 21st Century economy," Governor Granholm said in a prepared release.

The only example of a bill that proposes to limit or deny student access to accredited distance education programs that I can find, is the Amos/AMTA massage bill. The Amos/AMTA massage bill proposes to deny massage student access to distance education lecture courses. Why? What study or factual proof can be presented that massage students, as opposed to every other group regulated by the Michigan public health code, should not have access to basic health science or business lecture courses via distance education? Michigan schools, colleges and universities can offer business or nursing degrees online, but a massage student cannot take a basic business class online?

Please consider that single parent who is juggling family and child care responsibilities with education, self improvement, and preparation for a new job. Access to distance education with the cost and time savings associated with this method of instruction allows Michigan citizens to gain education and employment that would be denied to them by full time school or college residential attendance.

In a number of systematic moves the federal Congress has increased the availability of federal Title IV funding to schools offering accredited distance education opportunities. It makes no sense at all for the State of Michigan to single out massage students and to deny their right of access to distance education training.

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